

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

AUG 21 2006

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 2

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A draw bar and universal mount for a trailer hitch comprising:
a base plate including a first section, a second section and at least two rows of apertures; and
a shank including a first portion, a second portion and a central portion, the central portion connecting the first portion and the second portion, the shank including at least one opening, the shank further including one end disposed on the base plate;
wherein the base plate and shank are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of ~~material-~~ material; and
wherein the at least two rows of apertures comprises a first row of first apertures and a second row of second apertures, the first apertures not being co-linear with the second apertures such that a line would not be able to extend through both any one of the first apertures and any one of the second apertures.
2. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 1, further including:
a first strengthening member connecting the first section of the base plate to the first portion of the shank.
3. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 2,
wherein:
the first strengthening member includes a first central area and a first outer edge; and
the first outer edge extends beyond the central area forming a first T-shaped cross section with the first central area.
4. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 3, further including:

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 3

a second strengthening member connecting the second section of the base plate to the second portion of the shank.

5. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 4, wherein:

the second strengthening member includes a second central area and a second outer edge;

the second outer edge extends beyond the second central area forming a second T-shaped cross section with the central area.

6. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 5, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes an opening within the second central area.

7. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 6, wherein:
a segment of the second outer edge of the second strengthening member extends progressively further away from the second central area as the outer edge approaches at least one of the second portion of the shank and the base plate.

8. (canceled)

9. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 1, wherein:

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion at least partially form an I-shaped cross section.

10. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 9, wherein:

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a rectangular like cross section.

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 4

11. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 10, wherein:
the at least one opening extends through the rectangular cross section.
12. (canceled)
13. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 1, wherein:
at least one aperture from each of the at least two rows of apertures is disposed on the base plate between the first portion and the second portion of the shank.
14. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 1, wherein:
each of the first section and the second section of the base plate further include at least two corners; and
each of the at least two corners are radiused.
15. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 14, wherein:
the first section and the second section meet at an arcuate intersection.
16. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 15 including:
a strengthening member connecting the second section of the base plate with the second portion of the shank.
17. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 16, wherein:
the base plate, the shank and the strengthening member are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.
18. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 1, wherein:

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 5

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion at least partially form an I-shaped cross section.

19. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 18, wherein:
the at least two rows of apertures are longitudinally disposed along the longest dimension of the base plate.

20. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 19, wherein:
at least one aperture from each of the at least two rows of apertures is disposed on the base plate between the first portion and the second portion of the shank.

21. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 20, wherein:
the first portion, the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a square-like cross section.

22. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 21, wherein:
the at least one opening is disposed on the shank at the position where the first portion, the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a square-like cross section.

23. (currently amended) A draw bar and universal mount for a trailer hitch comprising:
a base plate including a first section and a second section and at least two rows of apertures;
a shank extending from the base plate, the shank including at least one opening;
a first strengthening member connecting the first section of the base plate to the first portion of the shank; and

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 6

a second strengthening member connecting the second section of the base plate with the second portion of the ~~shank~~, shank;

wherein the at least two rows of apertures comprises a first row of first apertures and a second row of second apertures, the first apertures not being co-linear with the second apertures such that a line would not be able to extend through both any one of the first apertures and any one of the second apertures.

24. (canceled)

25. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 23, wherein:
the base plate, shank, first strengthening member and second strengthening member are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.

26. (canceled)

27. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 23, wherein:

the first strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and
the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

28. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 23, wherein:

the second strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and
the outer edge extending beyond the central area forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

29. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 28, wherein:

the second strengthening member includes an opening within the central area.

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 7

30. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 29, wherein:
the outer edge of the second strengthening member further extends beyond the central area as the outer edge approaches at least one of the second portion of the shank and the base plate.
31. (original) The draw bar and universal mount to claim 23, wherein:
the base plate, the shank, the first strengthening member and the second strengthening member are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.
32. (canceled)
33. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 31, wherein:
the first strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and
the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.
34. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 33, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and
the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.
35. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 34, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes an opening within the central area.
36. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 35, wherein:
the outer edge of the second strengthening member further extends beyond the central

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 8

area as the outer edge approaches at least one of the second portion of the shank and the base plate.

37. (currently amended) A draw bar and universal mount for a trailer hitch comprising:
a base plate including a first section and a second section and at least two rows of apertures; and

a shank including one end disposed on the base plate, the shank further including a first portion, a second portion and a central portion, at least a section of the shank having an I-shaped cross section, with the central portion connecting the first portion and the second portion to form the I-shaped cross section, the shank including at least one ~~opening~~ opening;
wherein the at least two rows of apertures comprises a first row of first apertures and a second row of second apertures, the first apertures not being co-linear with the second apertures such that a line would not be able to extend through both any one of the first apertures and any one of the second apertures.

38. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 37,
wherein:

the base plate and shank are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.

39. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 37, further including:
a first strengthening member connecting the first section of the base plate to the first portion of the shank.

40. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 39,
wherein:

the first strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and

the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 9

41. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 40, further including:

a second strengthening member connecting the second section of the base plate to the second portion of the shank.

42. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 41, wherein:

the second strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge;

the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

43. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 42, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes an opening within the central area.

44. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 43, wherein:
the outer edge of the second strengthening member further extends beyond the central area as the outer edge approaches at least one of the second portion of the shank and the base plate.

45. (canceled)

46. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 37, wherein:
the first portion, the second portion and the central portion at least partially form an I-shaped cross section.

47-48. (canceled)

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appl. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 10

49. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 37, wherein:

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a square-like cross section.

50. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 49, wherein:

the at least one opening is disposed on the shank at the position where the first portion, the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a square-like cross section.

51-52. (canceled)

53. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 37 including:

a strengthening member connecting the second section of the base plate with the second portion of the shank.

54. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 53, wherein:

the base plate, the shank and the strengthening member are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.

55. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 37, wherein:

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion at least partially form an I-shaped cross section.

56-59. (canceled)

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 11

60. (currently amended) A draw bar mounting assembly for a trailer hitch comprising:
a base plate including a first section and a second section and at least two rows of apertures;

a shank including a first portion, second portion, and central portion, the central portion connecting the first portion and the second portion, the shank including at least one opening, wherein the shank further includes one end disposed on the base plate, and wherein further the base plate and shank are fabricated from a continuous piece of material; and

a pintle hook configured to be connected to the base plate;

wherein the pintle hook can be connected to the base plate using the at least two rows of

~~apertures, apertures; and~~

wherein the at least two rows of apertures comprises a first row of first apertures and a second row of second apertures, the first apertures not being co-linear with the second apertures such that a line would not be able to extend through both any one of the first apertures and any one of the second apertures.

61. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 60, further including:
a first strengthening member connecting the first section of the base plate to the first portion of the shank.

62. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 61,
wherein:
the first strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and
the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

63. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 62,
further including:
a second strengthening member connecting the second section of the base plate to the second portion of the shank.

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 12

64. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 63, wherein:

the second strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge;

the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

65. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 64, wherein:

the second strengthening member includes an opening within the central area.

66. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 65, wherein:

the outer edge of the second strengthening member further extends beyond the central area as the outer edge approaches at least one of the second portion of the shank and the base plate.

67. (canceled)

68. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 60,

wherein:

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion at least partially form an I-shaped cross section.

69. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 68,

wherein:

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a square-like cross section.

70-72. (canceled)

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 13

73. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 60,
wherein:

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion at least partially form an I-shaped cross section.

74-75. (canceled)

76. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 73,
wherein:

the first portion, the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a square-like cross section.

77. (canceled)

78. (currently amended) A draw bar mounting assembly for a trailer hitch comprising:
a base plate including a first section and a second section and at least two rows of apertures;

a shank including at least one opening, wherein the shank further includes one end disposed on the base plate;

a first strengthening member connecting the first section of the base plate to the first portion of the shank;

a second strengthening member connecting the second section of the base plate with the second portion of the shank; and

a pintle hook configured to be connected to the base plate;

wherein the pintle hook can be connected to the base plate through the at least two rows of apertures; apertures; and

wherein the at least two rows of apertures comprises a first row of first apertures and a second row of second apertures, the first apertures not being co-linear with the second

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 14

apertures such that a line would not be able to extend through both any one of the first apertures and any one of the second apertures.

79. (canceled)

80. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 78, wherein:
the base plate, shank, first strengthening member and second strengthening member are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.

81. (canceled)

82. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 78, wherein:
the first strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and
the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

83. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 78, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge;
the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

84. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 83, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes an opening within the central area.

85. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 84, wherein:
the outer edge of the second strengthening member further extends beyond the central

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 15

area as the outer edge approaches at least one of the second portion of the shank and the base plate.

86. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 78, wherein:

the base plate, shank, first strengthening member and second strengthening member are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.

87. (canceled)

88. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 86, wherein:

the first strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and
the outer edge extending beyond the central area forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

89. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 88, wherein:

the second strengthening member includes a central portion and an outer edge;
the outer edge extending beyond the central area forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

90. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 89, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes an opening within the central area.

91. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 90, wherein:
the outer edge of the second strengthening member further extends beyond the central area as the outer edge approaches at least one of the second portion of the shank and the base plate.

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 16

92. (currently amended) A draw bar mounting assembly for a trailer hitch comprising:
a base plate including a first section and a second section and at least two rows of apertures;

a shank including a first portion, second portion, and central portion, the central portion connecting the first portion and the second portion, the first portion and the second portion being at least partially longer in one direction than the central portion in the one direction, the shank including at least one opening, wherein the shank further includes one end disposed on the base plate; and

a pintle hook configured to be connected to the base plate;

wherein the pintle hook can be connected to the base plate through the at least two rows of apertures- apertures; and

wherein the at least two rows of apertures comprises a first row of first apertures and a second row of second apertures, the first apertures not being co-linear with the second apertures such that a line would not be able to extend through both any one of the first apertures and any one of the second apertures.

93. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 92, where the base plate and shank are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.

94. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 92, further including:
a first strengthening member connecting the first section of the base plate to the first portion of the shank.

95. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 94, wherein:
the first strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge; and
the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 17

96. (original) The draw bar and universal mount to claim 95, further including:
a second strengthening member connecting the second section of the base plate to the second portion of the shank.

97. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 96, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes a central area and an outer edge;
the outer edge extending beyond the central area and forming a T-shaped cross section with the central area.

98. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 97, wherein:
the second strengthening member includes an opening within the central area.

99. (original) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 98, wherein:
the outer edge of the second strengthening member further extends beyond the central area as the outer edge approaches at least one of the second portion of the shank and the base plate.

100. (canceled)

101. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 92, wherein:
the first portion, the second portion and the central portion at least partially form an I-shaped cross section.

102. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 101, wherein:
the first portion, the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a square-like cross section.

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.
Appln. No. : 10/519,009
Page : 18

103. (previously presented) The draw bar and universal mount according to claim 102,
wherein:

the at least one opening is disposed on the shank at the position where the first portion,
the second portion and the central portion of the shank at least partially form a square-like
cross section.

104-110. (canceled)